SINING BISWAL

AN ESSAY ON PHILIPPINE VISUAL ARTS

Alice G. Guillermo

Cultural Center of the Philippines
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FOREWORD

Painting a picture of its past and present, the following essay covers the various art forms collectively called the visual arts – **painting, sculpture, woodcarving, weaving, pottery, engraving** and others. It highlights the many paths that Filipino visual artists have explored in their quest for identity, from the precolonial art which did not distinguish itself from function as exemplified in the indigenous **bulol**, Manunggul jar, **t'nalak** and T'boli textiles: to the altars and **santos** of the Spanish period when art was used to weave colonial myths and sculpt colonial minds; to the rural landscape and genre paintings of the American period; to modernism, neo-realism, expressionism and social realism of contemporary times.

From Domingo, Luna, Hidalgo and Amorsolo, the essay proceeds to Tolentino, Edades, Manansala, Francisco and to contemporary artists, noting the many trends, influences, schools and movements in the visual arts of the Philippines. It traces the origins of traditional art, explains how it was almost lost in the deluge of foreign culture and how artists are now regaining their identity as Filipinos.

This monograph is part of **Tuklas Sining**, a series of essays and video documentaries on the seven art in the Philippines published by the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The monographs trace the evolution of the arts in the context of Philippine Society and history and they help create a Filipino national consciousness and identity. Furthermore, they illustrate how art and culture are essential to the task of nation-building.

Since these essays are intended for wide readership, they are written in simple language without sacrificing the authority of information. Bibliographies are provided for those who intend to do further research on the subjects. Each monograph is accompanied by its own video documentary which provides a general presentation of the art being discussed.

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From the indigenous mythologies of Bathala, the Spirit World, the origins of the universe and the human race, from the rituals for fertility and abundant harvest with which men sought to cope with the forces of nature for his own survival, the visual arts in our country draw their origins. With Spanish colonization in the 16th century, our arts adorned the altars of Catholic churches built all over the country. Economic change in the 19th century brought with it new images of the Filipino along with the theme of the search for the Filipino Identity. Up to the present time, this search has been an underlying theme of the contemporary arts which seek the full realization of the Filipino.

THE PRECOLONIAL PERIOD

Among our most ancient arts is **pottery**, which combines design and function. The Manunggul Jar excavated in Palawan is evidence of the high artistic level which the art attained in ancient times. This large burial jar has a cover which features two men rowing a boat, suggesting the belief of the early Filipinos in an afterlife that one reaches after crossing a mythical body of water. Around its body is an incised geometric pattern of lines and dots. Extant examples of early Philippine pottery show a wide variety of shapes and decorative techniques, such as incision, stippling, applique openwork and impression by rope and mat. Their design s were usually geometric with stylized nature motifs. Later, pottery became more and more functional, principal examples of which are the **palayok** for cooking, the **banga** and **tapayan** for the storing liquids. In the Ilocos, the making of **burnay** pottery continues as a lively tradition.

Weaving also originated in precolonial times and is one of our most precious living traditions. The Cordillera groups of the North are well-known for their art of weaving. The blankets and articles of clothing that they produce by means of the backstrap loom not only fulfill a practical function but also play a part in religion and ritual. This traditions spills over into the adjacent Ilocos provinces which take pride in their sturdy **abel** weave. In Mindanao, the T'boli of Cotabato weave abaca cloth called **t'nalak** in a difficult tie-dye process. This cloth has a large repertoire of motifs, such as the **g'mayaw** bird, whose rhythms create the feeling of flapping wings; the frog which signifies fertility; and the dancing man which calls for rain. These motifs attest to the T'bolis deep-seated sense of the harmony of man and nature.

Weaving techniques are also unsed tin the exquisite mats with vivid colors and intricate geometric designs woven by the women of Sulu, particularly from the islands of Laminusa and Siasi. In the Visaysa, Samar and Leyte are known for their colorful mats with bird and flower designs. The large mats meant for family use imply strong familial values.

Other arts that use weaving techniques are basketry, as well as the making of hats and fans. The cordilleras are rich in baskets for all purposes, reflecting occupational needs related to rice planting on the mountain terraces, hunting in the forests and fishing in the streams. Their backpack or **pasiking** for instance, is not only an example of good design but is also structured to support the human frame. Aside from baskets and containers related to hunting and agricultural activities,

there are also many kinds of bamboo fish traps with shapes and sizes to suit the different species of fish found in the rivers.

Many parts of the country have lively **woodcarving** traditions. The Cordillera groups carve **anito** figures called **bulol** which doubles as ancestral spirits and granary gods. They are often found in pairs to signify the value of fertility. Human and animal motifs are also intergrated into parts of houses such as door posts, as well as household objects such as bowls, forks and spoons.

In southern Philippines, the Maranaw and Tausog of Mindanao are known for their **okir-a-datu**, ornate curvilinear designs and motifs applied to woodcarving. The principal okir designs are the **sarimanok**, the **naga**, and the **pako rabong.** The sarimanok carved in wood, simply varnished or painted in many colors (it is also executed in brass), is the stylized design of a bird holding a fish in its beak or standing on a base in the shape of a fish. While its meaning derives from epics and myths, it also alludes to Lake Lanao with its fertile waters. The naga has the form of an elaborate mythical serpent with a vigorous S-curve and numerous curvilinear motifs to suggest its scales. The pako rabong is a stylized growing fern with a broad base gracefully tapering upwards . The sarimanok and naga are found in the **panolong,** the extended floor beam of the **torogan** or the large Sultan's house, and in its interior beams and posts.

The Tagbanua of Palawan carve wooden figures of different kinds of birds and animals. Again, their meanings are linked to religion and ritual. For birds play an aimportant part in Tagbanua mythology as messengers that link the many levels of their heaven. The animals and other creatures that they carve, such as the pig and the wild boar, have a part in their ritual as sacrificial offerings. Their carvings are of blackened wood, incised with geometric designs that bring out the original light tone of the material.

Jewelry, another ancient art, began as amulets and charms to ward off evil spirits or to give supernatural powers to the wearer. It was only later that it assumed a purely ornamental character. The Cordillera groups have an ancient amulet design call the **ling-ling-o,** said to signify fertility, found in necklaces, rings and earrings. The T'boli wear some of the most splendid body ornaments in brass chains and bells, strings and nets of multicolored beads, and fine chains of horsehair forming neckpieces, earrings and rings, bracelets and anklets. Related to religious belief and social function, body ornaments are worn to please the gods, to signify the status of the wearer and enhance her charm. A belt made of a row of brass bells that tinkle with every movement calls attention to the presence of a young marriageable girl. Often jewelry is worn along with elaborate tattoos on and around the arms and legs that function as a permanent body design with motif from nature related to the animist worldview. Even in our day, *anting-anting* medals with their mystical symbols and figures in relief are worn by the folks as amulets rather than as mere body ornaments.

Related to jewelry is **metalwork** in brass, bronze, and gold and silver done in the traditional lost wax or **cire perdue** process using clay molds and liquefied metal which hardens in the mold. Native metalwork technology includes the use of Malay forge with a blower. The T'boli make lively brass figurines which tell us about their occupations and activities, their work and play.

Brass vessels of different sizes, shapes and designs are also produced by the Maranaw for ceremonial purposes and as status symbols. Among these are the large **gadur** and the spouted

liquid container **kendi**, household objects often forming part of the wedding dowry. Again, these brass vessels combine practical function ans aesthetic design, as seen in their elaborate geometric and curvilinear designs. Also noteworthy is the variety of betel nut boxes, many of them in metal, that attest to the widespread social custom of betel-chewing often referred to in the epics and still extant among some Philippine groups.

Many of our rich living traditions which go back to precolonial times survive to the present day despite centuries of colonization. We owe the survival of the oldest arts to the resistance of tribal communities to colonial imposition. These arts constituting an important part of our cultural heritage are valuable to us because they attest to the inexhaustible creativity of the people, even as they are basic to the definition of our cultural identity.

THE SPANISH COLONIAL PERIOD

In the 16th century, Spanish colonization partitioned lands into *encomiendas* and sought to replace indigenous culture by one in the image and likeness of Europe. Art became a handmaiden of religion and served to propagate the Catholic faith by means of beautiful images, at the same time that it supported the colonial order. Since the Church was the sole patron of the arts up to the 19th century, the practice of art was under the strict supervision of the friars and Western models were provided for artists to copy. In time what resulted, however, was not a Western culture, but a colonial culture marked by a fusion of folk indigenous and Western elements.

Engraving by means of the xylographic method (which uses woodblocks) was one of the first Western art forms introduced in the country. The first book engraved and printed in this method was ***La Doctrina Christiana en la Lengua Espanola u Tagala*** (The Christian Doctrine in the Spanish and Tagalog Languages) which appeared in 1593. Published by the Dominicans, its engraving of Saint Dominic on the cover created a prototype. In the 17th century, engraving became widespread as books, such as novenas and the lives of saints, contained numerous engravings. A number of Filipino engravers were recognized for their talent, among them Nicolas de la Cruz Bagay and Francisco Suarez, who proudly identified themselves as "Indios Tagalos" in their signatures. The art of engraving was also put to use in cartography or map-making, as in the map commissioned by Fr. Murillo Velarde which the artists ornamented with genre scenes, possibly the first secular images in colonial art, along its border.

The folk penchant for decoration with the local motifs asserted itself in the various arts, such as painting, sculpture and architecture. The churches built all over the country exhibit the blend of Philippine folk and European classical or baroque. For instance, the relief stone carvings on the façade of the Miag-ao Church in Iloilo features a lively folk motif in the figure of Saint Christopher carrying Christ under a coconut tree in combination with curving balustrade motifs and ornate medallions of baroque. The same decorative spirit is found in the church **retablos** (altar pieces, usually with niches for images) ornamented with gilded solomonic columns topped by broken pediments. The **relleves** or holy images in relief and icons or paintings on wood sport

curlicues in floral motifs for their borders. The same is true for silver ornaments, for altars in the ornate platereque style of the silversmiths, as well as for the **carrozas** (floats) which carried the saints in procession.

It is also in the holy images of the **santos** enshrined in the church retables or displayed on private altars, that East and West converge. The formal statues for churches done under the strict supervision of the ecclesiastical authorities followed European aesthetic canons. Santos carved in the classical style, followed the prescribed proportions for the figure and conveyed the values of restraint and measure, while those showing baroque influence, whether in wood or in ivory, had an emotional expressionistic character, ON the other hand informal or folk santos drew from the indigenous sculpture styles of the angular and squat anitos with round, bulging eyes. The main reason for church supervision of religious art was to prevent the entry of unorthodox elements. Yet this was not always avoided, as can be seen in the representations of the Holy Trinity with the three depicted as human figures seated together in a row, and not according to the prescribed symbolic imagery.

Throughout the centuries of religious art, there was room for the folk creative imagination. Around the many *fiestas*, a multitude of **folk arts** developed with exuberant forms and colors. Among these were the Christmas lantern (**parol**), the Lenten palms (**palaspas**), papier mache (**taka**), animals, San Nicolas biscuits (**tinapay ni San Nicolas**), pastillas (candy made from carabao milk) wrappers and brightly colored native delicacies. These arts continue to the present, especially in regional centers such as Paete, which, aside from woodcarving, produces the taka, brightly colored papier mache animals, which are traditionally red horses with saddles and caparisons in floral designs. In Angono, another lakeshore town, the harvest festival brings out papier mache giants and carabaos in parade. In the Quezon towns of Lucban and Sariaya, the Maytime fiesta of San Isidro Labrador decks the houses in **kiping**, colorful leaf shapes made of rice flour and formed into chandelier, floral arrangements or covering all available space together with the harvest of fruits and grain, handicrafts and other products of the town. The art of lantern-making has culminated in our day in the huge Christmas lanterns of San Fernando, Pampanga, which are virtual kaleidoscopes of color and movement synchronized through music.

Woodcarving as folk art is also practiced in the Laguna towns of Paete and Pakil, as well as in Betis, Pampanga. Paete woodcarvers perfected the art of carving santos from native hardwood. After the initial coating of glue and plaster of paris (**gesso**) to create a non-porous ground, the work of the **encarnador** consists of giving the holy image a rosy lifelike hue or an ivory finish. A neighboring town, Pakil is known for its fans and toothpick trees of exquisite wood filigree, while the Betis woodcarvers of Pampanga apply their skills to furniture.

In the Visayas, other centers of folk art related to church fiestas are Kalibo in Aklan, where the Holy Child is honored with the *ati-atihan* in January. The participants don the most spectacular costumes and headdresses in a combination of feathers, beads and boar's teeth as in primitive art, while their bodies are blackened with soot. In the towns of Marinduque, the Moriones festival based on the story of Longinus is characterized by wooden masks in strong colors to resemble Roman centurions with their towering headdresses. These folk arts that fuse the indigenous and

the colonial with their Christian subject matter go back to the Spanish period which encouraged fiestas to win the people to Christianity and develop cultural support for the colonial order.

With the opening of the country to international trade in the mid-19th century, economic change came with cash crop agriculture. Foreign merchant houses established themselves in Manila and stimulated the cash economy. The new situation opened positions for agents and dealers to serve as liaison for the merchants; moneylenders, mostly Chinese mestizos (half-breeds), flourished, and the landlords converted their traditional produce to the new export crops in demand, such as sugar, coffee, abaca, hemp, and copra. The quota system was introduced, thereby applying greater pressure on the peasant farmers. The surplus from the cash crops which accrued to the landlords soon gave rise to the *ilustrado* (literally, enlightened; educated) class whose members became the new patrons of the arts. Higher education in the local universities or abroad became accessible to the ilustrados especially with the opening of the Suez canal. Their contact with European culture developed new tastes geared to Western aesthetics and created a class of connoisseurs for Western art forms.

Mid 19th century cash crop agriculture led to a boom in the building of the **bahay na bato,** the mansion of stone and wood which combined indigenous features with classical and baroque elements. For their handsomely furnished interiors, the ilustrados commissioned portraits that celebrated their social ascendance. Artists, such as Simon Flores, Antonio Malantic, Justiniano Asuncion, Dionisio de Castro and Isidro Arceo, were much in demand to do illustrado portraits. They worked in a style called **miniaturismo** derived from the miniaturist's art which pays meticulous attention to details of costume, its embroidery and textures, to fashion accessories and jewelry, as well as to domestic furnishings. These images reflected a dynamic stage in the development of the Filipino identity.

Along with **portraiture**, the first **genre** paintings appeared in the period, among which were Simon Flores' ***Primeras Letras*** (First Letters) and what was later titled ***Feeding Chickens*** which showed scenes of everyday life. The first painting brought out the primary role of women in child education. Also reflective of the spirit of the late 19th century were the watercolors of Jose Lozano, the ***Letras y Figuras*** (Letters and Figures), commissioned by the new entrepreneurs. They were a unique kind of painting because they were based on the letters of the patron's name, each letter of which was formed by small genre figures in bands interspersed with scenes of Intramuros, the Pasig environs and Manila Bay with the many ships carrying their countries' flags done in painstaking detail.

In the same period which saw the secularization of painting, Damian Domingo opened his Binondo studio as the first art school, the Academia de Dibujo y Pintura. He was well known for his watercolor albums of **tipos del pais**, inhabitants of the archipelago representing the entire range of the social hierarchy dressed in the typical costumes of their occupation and social class. These paintings done in the artist's personal style of figuration answered the demand of foreign visitors for local color. After Domingo's death, the school was resumed under the supervision of the Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais which brought over Spanish art professors from the Peninsula. It was through them that the European classical tradition was introduced into the

country. Furthermore, the school imported oil paintings from Europe to serve as models for the students.

Among the pupils of Damian Domingo was Lorenzo Guerrero who later became one of the teachers of the Academia, along with some European painting professors. Guerrero furthered landscape and genre painting in the country with such works as ***El Fuego*** (The Fire), ***The Water Carrier*** and ***Bride Before a Mirror***. Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo had a brief stint at the Academia during which Luna did portraits of his mother and brother Manuel, as well as a character study, ***El Violinista*** (The Violinist), while Hidalgo produced tranquil landscapes with nipa huts and a boat, culminating in the highly accomplished ***La Banca*** (The Boat). The two artists later chose to pursue their art in Europe.

The Madrid Exposition of 1884 was a significant event for the Filipino expatriate artists and for the Filipino Propagandists in Spain. Luna won the first gold medal for his large-scale academic painting ***Spoliarium,*** while Hidalgo garnered a silver medal for ***Virgenes Cristianas Expuestas al Populacho*** (Christian Virgins Exposed to the Public). In Jose Rizal's speech for the occasion, he extolled the two artists for proving that Filipinos could hold their own in the world of art, thus winning one more point in the propagandist campaign for political equality. The subject of Luna's ***Spoliarium*** can be interpreted as an allegory of Imperial Rome corresponding with Imperial Spain, with the image of the Romans dragging the dead gladiators symbolizing the colonial oppression of indigenous populations. The *spoliarium* was the basement hall of the Roman Colosseum where the dead and dying gladiators were dragged after the bloody games and stripped or despoiled of their last worldly effects. The other work, Hidalgo's ***Virgenes***, showed a group of captive maidens persecuted as Christians and offered as slaves to leering men. Both paintings conformed to the requirements of the European Academy: they were of large dimensions, they derived their subject matter from classical antiquity (in both works, Imperial Rome), they brought out the drama of the moment and their styles were characterized by modeling of forms and chiaroscuro. However, as Luna himself wrote, he belonged to the dissident salon with his bolder and more spontaneous style, while Hidalgo maintained a conservative and restrained approach to art. Another famous painting of Luna is ***El Pacio de Sangre*** (The Blood of Compact) depicting the treaty of friendship between Sikatuna and Legazpi.

Aside from their large academic paintings, Luna and Hidalgo did many smaller more intimate works, some portraits, other genre and landscapes. A number of Luna's works showed the spontaneity of spur-of-the-moment quality of oil sketches, such as ***El Borracho*** (The Drunkard) or ***Una Franchuta*** (An Old Woman), while most of Hidalgo's wprs were tranquil intimate pieces or nature paintings filled with romantic reverie. Exceptions to these were two political paintings by Hidalgo, ***La Iglesia contra el Estado*** (The Church against the State) and ***Par Pacem et Libertatem*** (Throug Peace and Liberty). The first work, said to have been commissioned by a mason, draws its subject from the 1719 assassination of Governor General Fernando Bustamante y Bustillo by a group of disgruntled firars and their cohorts. This historical event was the bloody climax of the growing hostility between the Church and the State, both institutions intensely protective of their interests. The second work, done at the turn of the century, advocated the iliustrado position of capitulation to American colonial rule in its image of a woman in

mourning, Madre Filipinas, offering an olive branch to a Joan of Arc-like figure with the stars and stripes.

The American Colonial Period

The gains of the Philippine Revolution of 1896 were thwarted by the Americans who crushed native resistance in the Philippine-American War, forcibly occupied the country and established a colonial government. Their colonial strategy lay primarily in the domain of ideology and culture. This was implemented through the public school system and educational programs. In the visual arts there was a demand for illustrations and cartoons for the textbooks and publications of the period. To answer the needs of the new corporations, commercial art and advertising design were integrated in to the fine arts curriculum.

The Americans as the new art patrons favored the idyllic landscapes and genre. Fabian de la Rosa painted portraits, genre scenes and landscapes with a coolly realistic eye, but it was the younger artist, Fernando Amorsolo with his tropical genre and ever-smiling *dalagang bukid* (country maiden) who became the image of the Filipino within a tropical idyll where youth reigned supreme and nature was infinitely bountiful. His famous backlighting which cast golden tones on the natural scenery created a warm emotional atmosphere. There were other fine artists but less prolific, such as Jorge Pineda, Irineo Miranda, Dominador Castaneda and Fernando's brother, Pablo Amorsolo. They contributed to the development of genre painting especially Pineda with his series of native indoor games which capture the intimate, leisurely spirit of the domestic life of the period. Like the maestro, they were painters as well as illustrators for such publications such as ***La Independencia, Philippines Free Press*** and ***Lipang Kalabaw***. It is of note that many illustrations of the period satirized the colonial system.

In **sculpture,** the dominant personality was Guillermo Tolentino who received classical training in Rome. He did a number of works such as ***Oblation*** and ***Venus***, as well as busts and life-size figures of public figures, such as President Quezon. But he is best known for his masterpiece, the ***Bonifacio Monument*** in Caloocan completed in 1930. which expresses the nationalist fervor in the struggle against colonial rule. Bonifacio at the center of the storm is surrounded by episodes or stages of the Revolutiono from the Gomburza execution to the uprising of revolutionaries calling to arms. Following Tolentino was his student, Anastacio Caedo, who in turn passed on the tradition to his son. Another sculptor of the American period was Ramon Martinez who did the single-figure prototype sculpture of Bonifacio original for Balintawak.

The dominance of Amorsolo was challenged by Victorio Edades who introduced modernism in his 1928 Philippine Columbian exhibit upon his arrival from the United States. His advocacy of modern art triggered a lively debate between conservatives and modernists, each camp staunchly upholding their aesthetic values. Edades, whose influence lay primarily in his role as educator, stressed that the subject of art goes beyond the beautiful and harmonious to include the ugly and the frightening. He also asserted the importance of design and formal elements that underlies modernism. But he also had the vision mto realize the need for developing the Filipino identity in art.

While the main protagonists in painting were Amorsolo and Edades, in sculpture it was Guillermo Tolentino and his pupil Napoleon Abueva. The latter championed modernist values in sculpture while striving for a Filipino idiom. Abueva has worked in a wide variety of materials and techniques. His personal preference is wood, mainly narra and molave, carved directly. However, he has also worked in adove and alabaster, in different kinds of metal, brass, bronze and aluminum, as well as in concrete. His style is marked by playfulness and charming wit, his works often integrating sculptural and functional aspects. Sculptors showing the influences of Abueva are Renato Rocha and Ros Arcilla.

The support system for modern art was laid down with the founding of the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP) with its annual painting competition which welcomed modernists as well as conservative works. The other important development was the Philippine Art Gallery which provided a venue for the exhibits of fledgling modernists. Central to these projects were two women, Purita Kalaw-Ledesma who founded the AAP and Lydia Villanueva-Agruilla, who opened the pioneering Philippine Art Gallery in Ermita.

After the Second World War and the granting of independence, the question of national identity was posed by writers and artists. In fact, the firs impetus to modernism was coupled with the quest for national identity. Artists dealt with the challenge of identity in various ways, through subject matter, content and form. Along with this issue was the debate between proletarian art and art for art's sake which appeared with the widespread poverty of the period.

Modern painting grew with the triumvirate formed by Victorio Edades, Carlos "Botong" Francisco and Galo Ocampo. They were followed by the Thirteen Moderns and the Neo-Realists in the 1950s.

Angono-based Carlos Francisco strove to develop a modern Filipino idiom based on folk aesthetics. He drew his figures with a supple curvilinear line, with but slight modeling of form. His patterns and colors created a decorative quality, the entire space covered with the figures and motifs. He drew most of his subjects from the life of his lakeshore town, and he gave to genre painting a rich particularity of observation of the customs, traditions and material culture of fishermen and farmers. Assiduous research gave his art a rich historical dimension and the high point of his art was achieved in his murals on the history of Manila for the Manila City Hall.

Galo Ocampo was first known for his ***Flagellants*** series which fused the religious imagery of Lend and penitence with images of the war. A key painting of the period is ***Ecce Homo*** (Behold, the Man) which portrays a bound Christ in the midst of devastation by bombing. In a number of his works, he superimposed Christ with a flagellant in the context of war. Years later, he did a series on the Tabon Cave in Palawan where the fossil of the Philippine Adam was found. These paintings abound with Adam and Eve in a pristine universe of caves and seashells.

Vicente Manansala expanded the subject matter of art from the rural idylls of the Amorsolo School to the postwar urban realities of jeepneys recycled from the war, candle and amulet vendors in Quiapo which was the hub of economic struggle, and the patchwork *barong-barong* (shanties) that appeared with displacement and poverty. Manansala thus significantly contributed to the development of Philippine genre in the modernist idiom for at the same time, he evolved his own

style of transparent cubism, an indigenization of the original Paris style. It is often observed that unlie Paris cubism which fragmented the human form, the cubism of Manansala and his followers did not so much as cut up the human figure as reorganized it in facets of transparent planes.

H.R. Ocampo started with a period of proletarian art, showing the hungry poor and the star social contrasts in the urban postwar setting. An important painting of this period, ***Crucifixion***, shows Christ on the cross, flanked by the two thieves against a background of factories spewing forth noxious orange fumes. Other paintings of his in this period brought out the sharp contrast between rich and poor in postwar Manila. He subsequently moved away from social themes and sought to develop a Filipino abstract idiom from traditional designs that recalled indigenous weaves. Later, he became widely known for an abstract style of interlocking colored planes forming motifs or stylized figures.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho has done numerous paintings of bandana-wearing women interacting in work rhythms. Among her well-known works are her series on ***Chickens*** which have a lively playful air. As a student in New York in the 1950s she was first influenced by American artistic developments, but her work increasingly became oriental in style and feeling, as she shifter from expressionist boldness to exquisite refinement.

Another early modernist, Romeo Tabuena was known for his delicate watercolors of the rural scene. In these, his subjects consisted mainly of fields with carabaos and nipa huts in an early morning haze as though from dew rising, in a style which combined exquisite linearity with tonal effects. He also worked in an intense, vigorous style in dark tones and harsh bold strokes diametrically different from the first, and in which he depicted sun-shriveled peasants and workers.

Cesar Legaspi's work shows a number of periods in the development of his modernist idiom. In the postwar years, he tended towards proletarian art in such a painting as ***The Beggars*** showing two wretched figures huddled among the ruins in monochrome brown cubist fragmentation. He later continued in strongly structured and textured tonal works in brown monochrome, their imagery drawn from stone quarries and tribal figure carvings in the search for basic origins. Later, after experimental works in sculptured surfaces, he explored rhythmic figures in richly orchestrated tones and colors. His dynamic ***Jeepney*** series with suggestions of street graffiti is the culmination of his style.

A branch of modernism was abstraction, among the first poponents of which were Jose Joya and Constancio Bernardo. A Cranbrook scholar, Joya in the 1950s was strongly influenced by New York abstract expressionism in the spontaneity and verve of his abstracts. Later, his paintings became more reflective, with more clearly defined forms, a style carried over into his rice paper collages. Bernardo, another US scholar, worked in the geometric abstraction of the International Style. Fernando Zobel began with folk subjects such as the carroza and preceeded to linear abstraction, then to tonal works with geometric elements. Arturo Luz is another leading abstractionist, although his early linear series and following tonal works derived from the figure. Federico Aguilar Alcuaz began with the dark and intense convoluted form and later worked in variations of synthetic cubism. Nena Saguil, one of the early modernists, has done abstract landscapes based on circular forms. Lee Aguinaldo, working in geometric forms and in mixed

media, belongs to the same generation. From abstract paintings, Chabet has done witty collages and works emphasizing the conceptual aspect. In sculpture, Arturo Luz and Eduardo Castrillo have done large scale outdoor sculpture. Working on a smaller scale in the abstract is sculptor-architect Honrado Fernandez.

Abstraction has always had a number of followers among younger artists. Lao Lian Ben works in the minimalist vein with sculptural elements. Augusto Albor has also been minimalist and geometric. Tiny Nuyda has done abstract mystical landscapes combining hard-edge and tonal qualities. Glenn Bautista has produced difficult and highly experimental work in painting, graphics and sculpture. Allan Cosio has geometric works in painting and sculpture, while Ivi Avellana-Cosio has shifted from color fields to ethnic themes using indigenous materials. Paz Abad Santos' large-scale works are a high point in the use of local materials, such as burlap and coconut shell. Impy Pilapil, a printmaker, produces hard-edge abstractions and spare, color landscapes, aside from paintings on glass and sculptural works in the same vein. Other abstractionists of note are Nestor Veneracion and Phyllis Zaballero, both of whose works occasionally allude to landscapes and figures, and in the case of the latter has elements and colors of a symbolic and emotional connotation. With them are Roy Veneracion, who alternates between textured abstractions and vivid and highly original figurative paintings of political meaning, and Benjie Cabangis with his planar compositions.

With modernism in place, the dynamic 1960s saw the flourishing of different styles and trends, many of which reflected a society in ferment with the economic and political issues of the Marcos period. It was a period marked by political awareness and a strong nationalist temper. Student organizations spearheaded protest actions and mass mobilizations took place.

Highly expressionist works conveyed anxieties and tensions of the period. Imagery had shifted form the beautiful and harmonious to the powerful and aggressive. Works that reflected a society in ferment were produced by Ang Kiu Kok in his angst-ridden figures and Danny Dalena in his ***Jai Alai*** series. While the subjects of Ang Kiu Kok draw from Philippine realitites of poverty and oppression, he has used universal symbols, such as stockpiled weapons, dogfights, man on fire and the Crucifixion, and has dwelt not on the concrete particularities of time and place bu on the theme of the "human condition". Dalena on the other hand, has used the swarming masses of the Jai Alai betting hall as an allegory for desperate humanity seeking hope in a game of chance. Like Ang Kiu Kok, Dalena uses distortion for strong impact. Onib Olmedo is another powerful expressionist with his explorations of the nightside of man which brings out monstrous or strangely beautiful apparitions. With them, the penchant to idealize and beautify became a thing of the past.

In printmaking, Rodolfo Perez's woodcuts of the 1960s have a haunting expressionist quality.

In sculpture, J. Elilzalde Navarro's masks and tribal forms capture the intensifty of aboriginal art. Also in the expressionist vein are the sculptures of Virginia Ty-Navarro with her birds in flight, Edgar Doctor with his machine assemblages and Conrado Mercado with his imprisoned forms and open-cage instructions. Eduardo Castrillo who works both in the abstract and in the figurative has outstanding expressionist belief sculpture with socio-political meaning.

The sculpture of Jerry Araos who works in discarded wood have a powerful expressionist impact, as in his ***Balimbing*** (literally, stars) and ***Crucifixion.***

Surrealist works showed an interest in probing man's innermost self for the dark impulses that are the hidden motivations of behavior. At the same time, surrealism was used to rendeer in symbolic form themes and messages, political, social or personal, that are suppressed in public. A senior artist working in a surrealist vein is Juvenal Sanso whose land-and-water landscapes have a nocturnal glow. A younger surrealist is Ramon Gaston whose striking works combine elements from different cultural contexts and reverse familiar situations. Francisco Viri has also done surrealist work of a highly intellectual bent. Lamarrosa's series on the ***Amburyan Queen*** combines surrealism and pop elements, while his landscapes subvert the real with the magical, at the same time that ecology is an underlying concern. Religions imagery combined with pop in the color prints of Ofelia Gelvezon-Tequi create a surrealist atmosphere rife with social and political meanings. In her works, protest has a foreboding quality in the figures of the Apocalypse that is one of the options of the pinball game.

At the same time, there has always been a trend in folk genre among regional artists inspired by the example of Carlos Francisco. Strong regional centers of art are the lakeshore towns of Angono, Tanay and Paete; Cebu and Bacolod in the Visayas; And Davao City in Mindanao. In Angono, the lively genre tradition is assured by a number of artists headed by Jose Blanco and his family. Blanco's work is the epitome of the realist genre as the numerous figures that inhabit his large paintings are the real people of his town. Other importand Angono artists are Salvador Juban, Nemesio Miranda Jr., Vicente Reyes and a large younger group. The Tanay artists are headed by Tam Austria in his mother-and-child paintings within the context of folk culture and his Maria Makiling series. In Paete, the Baldemors are the leading figures. Manuel Baldemor draws his inspiration from the colors and forms of his woodcarving town of Paete with its folk religious fervor. Lito and Fred Baldemor translate the native mythologies into sculpture. In printmaking, Manuel Rodriguez Sr. also popularized genre subjects in his many prints of a folk quality.

A number of artists have been concerned with capturing the vanishing scenes of a society in transition. Thus, there are paintings of old houses, buildings or landmarks with a nostalgic air in a context of social change. Most notable in this genre are the works of Lino Severino, sensitive tonal paintings of turn-of-the-century houses in a state of neglect and disrepair. In monochrome, they invite the viewer to dwell on the passing of things, to contemplate the details of structure and ornament that were once part of an era that gave way to new forms. Elmer Gernale has been more illustrative in approach. Roddy Ragodon has concentrated mainly on churches and houses. One fine artist in pen-and-ink is Anotnio Doctor Garcia, who, in his best work, goes beyond illustration to artistic vision.

Nature painting has often been in the impressionist style. A Filipino expatriate in France was Macario Vitalis, whose early work showed the cubist influence of the School of Paris but who tended more naturally towards an impressionist-pointilist style. Many impressionist artists have been identified with the Dimasalang group, with writer-artist Emilio Aguilar Cruz providing guidance and inspiration. Among its leading members were Cebuano artists Romulo Galicano and the Mendoza brothers, SYM, Godofredo and Teofilio. In general, Cebuano artists, such as Subang

and Cempron, were brought up in the impressionist tradition of nature painting under the tutelage of maestro Martino Abellana. Ibarra de la Rosa's Makiling landscapes are a high point in nature painting. A number or nature painters work outside the impressionist school. Manuel "Boy" Rodriguez Jr. has been experimental in his approach, using fabric and dyes as medium and introducing the theme of expatriate nostalgia for the Philippine landscape. Francisco Verano has done paintings incorporating sand for textural effect. Nature paintings of a different style and character are done by Danilo Santiago in the context of nationalist themes and in a cubist style marked with split images and symbols. Johahmar Salvosa has also done paintings on the ecological theme with different techniques. Based in Italy, Leon Pacunayen is a master in watercolor landscapes.

There has also been a trend in magic realism or "macro-vision" in which the onjects of everyday life are viewed with a fresh eye and dwelt upon in all their formal qualitites and connotations of meaning. The paintings of Stevesantos may focus on a solitary tin pail set on a field of grass, showing the influence of the American artist Andrew Wyeth. Or they may show the doorway of a ramshackle house with a dog basking in the sun, although later Stevesantos dwelt on the features of the urban landscape, such as billboards and theater marquees. Nestor Leynes painted boys on a carabao from above, while Efren Lopez painted unusual high-angle images of a mother giving suck to her child on an old frayed mat. Araceli DAns with her meticulous still-lifes of *calado*-embroidered tablecloths, native baskets and flowers can also be counted in this category.

Some artists draw their inspiration from folk art and the fresh, naïve art of children. Thus, their figures are drawn with directness and spontaneity, their colors festive and their space entirely covered with decorative forms. To this group belong Mauro Malang Santos, a cartoonist turned painter, who has depicted the folk in fiestas in a style that draws out the folk quality of Manansala's transparent cubism, and Antonio Austria in whose work a sophisticated sense of color and design underlies an apparently naïve style. Angelito Antonio can also be grouped under this trend, although his work shows Manansala influenced combined with an expressionist aspect. Mario Parial also draws inspiration from folk themes in a lush tropical setting of vigorous, spiky vegetation. Norma Belleza typifies this tendency in her simplified figuration, rich folk colors and variety of detail. To an extent, Zny Laygo also works in this style, dealing with folk themes in an original way. More in the realist vein is Angel Cacnio whit his cockfights that bring out folk psychology. Claude Tayag, often a landscapist, does charming watercolors of Paete papier mache horses and folk masks in original compositions strong in design. A new direction has been given by Aro Soriano who does vivid and unusual paintings inspired by folk lsongs and riddles, as well as tera-cotta sculptures with folk inspiration.

Some paintings derive their content from the life and concerns of the cultural communities which have preserved their traditions. Ethnic designs and motifs have been incorporated by some artists into contemporary art, as in the works of Abdulmari Imao in his variations of the sarimanok in painting and sculpture and Bert Manta in his okir and mat series. Also significant here are the works of Fil de la Cruz in mezzotint, pastel or watercolor. With field research, he has come up with some of the most authentic and artistic representations of the Subanon and other Mindanao groups. Santi Boses's Cordillera paintings are original in their use of ethnic motifs with the

underlying theme of identity crisis. Bobby Feleo has explored the *Pintado* (literally, painted one; 17th century term applied to the inhabitants of the Visayas who were tattooed) identity theme as well as the nuclear theme in a number of experimental works in layers of wood and glass approaching three-dimensional form. Nonon Padilla, Fred Liongoren and Ana Fer have dealt with ethnic themes and imagery although in different ways and concerns.

The historical trend was also visible in the work of some artists who have looked to the past in the hope of illuminating the present. Historical allusions have also been used to created reverberations between the past and the present and to couch contemporary political meanings in the imagery of the past. Ben Cabrera began this trend with his imagery based on old 19th century photographs in which he perceived different aspects of the Filipino identity, urban and rural. Christian, Muslim and animist. In his series ironically entitled ***Bandit and Gentleman***, he juxtaposed 19th century ilustrado and rebel, at the same time showing the awareness of differing points of view: that of colonial and colonized native, or that of the dominant and dominated social classes. The historical theme often drew from the 19th century Propaganda Movement and the Revolution, as in some works of Jaime de Guzman, particularly his ***Liliw*** mural, inspired by the heroic ideals of the time. The ***Tarot Card*** series of Brenda Fajardo, painter and printmaker, bring out a strong historical and nationalist themes, along with folk and surrealist aspects. The tarot images have been indigenized to convey a narrative of anti-colonial struggle.

With the declaration of Martial Law on September 21, 1972, social realism took the lead in protest art. Banding together as a group dealing with socio-political themes but working in different styles, the social realists have worked in a variety of styles and media to expose the foreign-dominated and exploitative structures and express the people's aspiration for a just, free and sovereign society. Within these general concerns, there are particular themes, such as the struggle of the cultural communities, land reform, workers' rights, women's liberation and increasing foreign intervention. While there were earlier groups of political artists, the Kaisahan social realists refined and developed the aesthetics of the school. The major social realists of the original group are Pablo Banes Santos, Edgar Fernandez, Antipas Delotavo, Orlando Vastillo, Renato Habulan, Al Manrique, Neil Doloricon, Papo de Asis, Bogie Tence Ruiz. They have been joined by younger artists such as Federico Sievert, Elmer Borlongan and Lito Mondejar. Outstanding political artists form the regions are Nunelucio Alvarado and Charlie Co from Bacolod, Ruben de Vera and Rafael Cruz from Davao, and Aster Tecson from the Cordilleras. Because of their immediate experience with grassroots struggle they have been able to articulate their themes with vivid and highly specific images in drawings, paintings and sculptures.

Women artists like Imelda Cajipe-Endaya, Ana Fer, and Brenda Fajardo have made some of the most cogent political statements on the contemporary national situation. An eloquent exponent of feminism is Julie Lluch-Dalena in her sculptures raising questions on traditional female roles.

Exploring new sculptural forms, Tence Ruiz's jeepney assemblages and his mixed media in sculpture of the torture victim convey their themes with artistic power, together with Rey Paz Conteras' masterful ***Torture and Death*** in the Paco railroad station on the theme of human rights.

Increasing socio-political consciousness has also brought out the need for the democratization of art through the use of indigenous materials, the transformation of indigenous forms by contemporary content and the use of popular forms such as cartoons, comics and illustrations which can reach a larger number, at the same time that the visual arts have interacted with other arts such as music and theater. Cajipe-Endaya has been most successful in the use of indigenous materials such as *sawali* ad fabric collages to convey feminist anti-US intervention themes in a vivid folk imagery. In her posters and illustrations, Fer has imaginatively articulated ethnic and political themes. In the genres of the political cartoon and illustration, Tence Ruiz follows in the high standards of the form earlier set by Danny Dalena. Other political cartoonists of note are Neil Doloricon and Arnel Mirasol. Arists such as Brenda Fajardo have also worked in dynamic forms combining theater, visual arts, music and dance.

These recent efforts towards the democratization of art, especially art of liberative meaning, while promoting the diversity of artistic expressions and forms, have been geared towards the development of a people's art, shaping and defining the national identity and articulating the people's sentiments and aspirations. Philippine art can thus realize its full vitality in becoming a national force for change towards a truly democratic and human order.